

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

I am writing from The Fund for Women Artists to urge the FCC to retain the remaining restrictions on media ownership, especially the broadcast-newspaper cross-ownership rule; the local TV multiple ownership rule; the radio-TV cross-ownership rule; the national TV ownership rule; and the dual network rule. These rules help maintain some diversity of voices in the national media, a condition critical to the health of our democracy and culture. A news media controlled by a few large corporations does not serve the public interest; it serves the corporate bottom line, limiting debate and keeping citizens uninformed.

Consolidation in television means that programming, as well as news, becomes homogenized, limiting employment opportunities for women and trapping them in stereotyped roles. In the last TV season only 8% of prime-time shows were directed by women, and only 19% were written by women. Women characters on these programs were overwhelmingly white (74%) and young (58% were in their 20s and 30s, while 54% of male characters were in their 40s and 50s.) In fact, viewers were more likely to see female aliens and demons than Asian-American women in prime time!

As an organization dedicated to increasing the employment and diversity of women in the arts, especially in theatre, film, and television, The Fund for Women Artists is concerned that more consolidation will further limit women's employment opportunities in television and cable and continue to encourage stereotyped and limiting portrayals of women and girls. Democratic control of the media means more diverse programming and more employment for women and people of color - behind and in front of the camera.

Please support a diverse and democratic media. Maintain the ownership rules.